A method of detecting the presence of anomalies in a preservative treated sample, prepared from fresh biological tissue or cells in natural or cultured form, by infrared spectroscopy

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The presence of anomalies in biological tissue and cells in natural or cultured form (e.g. cancerous tissue or cells) is detected by directing a beam of infrared light at a preservative treated sample, prepared from fresh biological tissue or cells, in either the transmission mode or the Attenuated Total Reflectance (ATR) mode. The anomaly is then determined by whether changes in infrared absorption have occurred, due to the vibration of at least one functional group of molecules present in the sample, which are characteristic of the anomaly. The preservative may be an aqueous solution of formalin, an aqueous solution of ethyl alcohol, or an aqueous solution of inorganic salts. The preservative treatment prevents degradation of the sample at room temperature which has been found to change the infrared absorption characteristics which can lead to misinterpretations.